

From
THE CHAIRMAN'S OFFICE

CONSERVATIVE & UNIONIST CENTRAL OFFICE,
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10th January 1983

Dear Mr Mount,

The Chairman has asked me to send

this post-mortem of the 1979 Election to you.

Yours sincerely,

Shirley Oxenbury

Shirley Oxenbury

→
Jan

F. Mount, Esq.,
10 Downing Street.

G E N E R A L
E L E C T I O N

3RD MAY 1979

LORD THORNEYCROFT

GENERAL ELECTION 1979

INTRODUCTION

These papers are an attempt to bring together some lessons which can be learnt about fighting an Election drawn from our experiences in the Campaign of 1979. I have deliberately allowed, and indeed encouraged, the comments to be self-critical and at times contradictory to one another. There is no other way in which lessons can be learnt. In my judgment some of those most ready to criticise themselves in fact made some of the ablest contributions to success.

It may be helpful, however, if I set down a few considerations of my own. I do not presume to make a final judgment on what went right or what went wrong, but I am saying why some things were done the way they were, and why other courses were avoided.

There are a number of headings under which an Election can be considered. For my purpose here I take the following as relevant.

- (a) The main image and policies of the principal contending Parties.
- (b) The preparatory period for drawing up the Administration, Organisational and Financial arrangements.
- (c) The strategy followed in presenting the Conservative case.
- (d) The conduct of the Campaign.
- (e) The subsequent analysis.

THE MAIN CONTENDERS

We won the Election. Had we lost it virtually every decision and step mentioned in these papers would have been condemned. Instead Margaret Thatcher presides as Prime Minister over a stable Government and the Party Organisation is praised for what is generally regarded as a notably successful Campaign.

These papers are not primarily about policy, though policy and election planning are inextricably linked to one another. The basis of success in the Election was the theme upon which the Leader of the Party chose to fight the Campaign. This theme of freedom under the law was developed into the need to cut back the frontiers of state intervention and state spending; to lower taxation; to enlarge the opportunities and rewards for individual enterprise and effort. These themes were argued by her and her supporters with energy, with conviction and without compromise. They were not stated in extreme terms but as a time for change and in the final analysis they were accepted as the common sense which the majority of voters wanted.

Elections are won as to an important part by the errors, misfortunes and mistakes of one's opponents. The Labour Party had their full share of these culminating in the winter of 1978/1979 which had been marked by a series of industrial disputes conducted with a remarkable degree of arrogance by the militants within the Unions, and handled with indifferent skill by the Labour Government.

Labour also suffered from having been in power for eleven out of the past fifteen years and being held responsible for many of the Nations discontents. Despite these difficulties Mr Callaghan fought a brilliant campaign almost alone. He struggled hard for the middle ground and sought to paint the Conservatives as the Party of dangerous or untried reforms.

POLICY

The Labour Party had for practical purposes run out of policies and in any event lacked the overall majority to push through new ones - the final fling consisted of the attempts at devolution in Scotland and in Wales both of which in varying degrees failed almost dramatically in their intention.

Whereas Labour policy is formed from the bottom up - starting at the Party Conference, working through the National Executive Committee and reaching a point of final selection by the Cabinet; the Conservatives proceed upon an opposite course. The format of Conservative policy stems from the Leader of the Party working with the Shadow Cabinet and is transmitted downwards for comment and criticism, but very seldom for important change to the Voluntary Party and the Party Conference. The actual process of policy formation in the Shadow Cabinet and to a lesser degree, in the Cabinet, is aided by a various assortment of policy committees and by the devoted work of the Conservative Research Department.

This work of policy formation prior to the Election of 1979 is perhaps best illustrated by two documents. The Right Approach, published by the Conservatives, and Labour 1976, published by the Labour Party.

The problem which confronts the Conservative Party with documents such as The Right Approach is that in parts it represents a treaty between conflicting views within the Shadow Cabinet. The problem that confronts the Labour Party with documents such as Labour 1976 is that its terms have been drawn so graphically by the Left that it would be likely to throw away the Centre ground for which the Labour leaders would be struggling. The two documents are attached to these papers for convenience of references and for comparison with the actual campaign that was fought.

STRATEGY

On the face of it, the Conservatives plainly stood in a potentially winning position. Nevertheless, the Party had been through a period of some divisions about policy, and the nation had become dangerously accustomed to living beyond its real resources with results largely obscured by the new income from North Sea oil and by printing money. Probably at all times and certainly in the run-up to an Election, it is necessary to decide the basic strategy which would, of course, be based upon the broad theme of policy laid down by the Leader and her colleagues in the Shadow Cabinet.

A Strategy Paper is not the same thing as a Policy Paper. The latter, if prepared for publication, tends to blur the edges of dispute. It is often as much concerned with packaging as with content. A Strategy Paper addressed to the narrow, critical and fully informed audience of the Shadow Cabinet cannot pull its punches.

A Strategy Paper used during the discussions in the Shadow Cabinet is attached (Appendix 'A') as an illustration of the need to analyse the issues uppermost in the public mind, to decide the points to stress and not to stress, and the general lines of detailed policy which could, with advantage, be usefully developed. The selection of the target voters is an important decision. Strategy is about the winning of Elections. It should be taken by all Cabinets as a serious and special subject.

Perhaps the most frustrating problem confronting the Conservative Party and still indeed confronting the nation, was to be found in the question of how to move from wage control towards free collective bargaining in the face of the acknowledged imbalance of power between Management and the Unions. This question was dealt with by Margaret Thatcher first in a Party Political Broadcast on Wednesday, 17th January and secondly, in a speech at the Coburg Hotel, Paddington, on 18th December 1978, attached (Appendix 'B').

These statements removed the main obstacles to agreed policy formation and work on these policies which had already been advanced in publications such as *The Right Approach*, and *The Right Approach to the Economy*, proceeded relatively smoothly to the drawing up of the Party Manifesto.

On another occasion, the problems will of course be different. Something, however, can perhaps be learnt about the techniques for resolving them. John Hoskyns, who was at the relevant time working from the Centre for Policy Studies, and is today Head of the Policy Unit at Downing Street, contributes some thoughts in Appendix 'C'. Much depends on the personalities involved, but there is force in his arguments for a rather less haphazard approach towards electoral strategy than the one which circumstances more or less compelled us to adopt. A much closer liaison between the Research Department, the Central Office and any outside organisation formed by the leadership such as the Centre for Policy Studies would not have come amiss. Actual practical discussion about how to win the Election of 1983/1984 could usefully begin rather earlier than it did in the case of the Election of 1979.

ELECTION PREPARATIONS

Time spent in the careful preparation of administrative organisational and financial arrangements is seldom wasted. These plans are referred to in detail in Appendix 'D'. They will provide at least an Agenda for discussions for a future Election. The Deputy Chairman of the Party is the right person to chair most of the discussions about the nitty-gritty of the Election arrangements.

If the Chairman of the Party had to resolve all the detail of administrative problems, it would gravely impair his ability to carry out his more important functions in seeking to orchestrate, and under instructions from the Leader, to control the conduct of the whole campaign.

Lady Young was in fact Deputy Chairman during the relevant period and some thoughts by her in the problems raised during the administration run-up are set out at Appendix 'E'.

ELECTION PROCEDURES

There is room for plenty of argument as to whether what we did was rightly done. It is certain that much of it could be improved. A few problems are perhaps worth mentioning here.

THE LOCATION OF THE CHAIRMAN

We decided early to keep the Chairman full time available to the office. This was done on the advice of previous Chairmen who have adopted other arrangements themselves. It seems to be the best thing to do. Somebody must be available to make the best decision that he can on the many matters which plainly cannot be referred to the Leader heavily engaged campaigning in the country.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN

Lady Young was located with the Leader's group, but reporting back to the Chairman and always available to him. This ensured a full time link between the Leader's Campaign and the Office; however great the pressure might be at either end, it worked.

THE AGENCY

The job of politicians is to propound policy. The job of the Agency is to translate political ideas into varied forms from television broadcasts to posters and press advertising. The job of the Research Department is about all the check facts - not always an easy one.

The process worked, but (see Appendix 'F' from Research Department), it could have worked better. The nearer the relevant Parties are to one another, the better the chance that they will work in concert rather than in conflict.

THE SPEECH WRITERS

Speech writing is a very personal thing. A fair number of speech writers were used in the 1979 campaign. David Howell, MP, who also was a member of the Leader's team, had a co-ordinate role.

What speech writers actually write is a matter between them and the person they write for. What is important is that the organisation should be such that they know what everybody else is saying, understand the timing and the main thrust of the campaign, and have full access to every fact that the Research Department can make available to them.

These complex relationships were at times less than perfect in their operation. An attempt to improve them must be made.

THE PRESS CONFERENCE

These are dealt with in a note from the Communications Department at Appendix 'G'. The idea was so far as possible to select a topic and hold the initiative upon it. Such arrangements seldom work in any great detail. The activities of other Parties, events in the world outside, the whims of the media all have distorting effects. The press handout system for these conferences started badly, mainly because far too many people were involved. At the Leader's press conference briefing, the suggested handout had no friends and was shot to pieces by its critics. In the event, the spokesman for the day was allowed to write his own. It was not perfect, but it was rather better than other more sophisticated attempts. Despite their setbacks, the press conference set a broad pattern for the whole campaign.

THE CAMPAIGN ITSELF

It would be a mistake to take the pattern of a campaign we won and apply it to wholly different circumstances at a date far distant from the present.

The 1979 campaign was in the event a fairly clearly structured one. The Conservatives were fighting rather as a Government, with the Labour Party attacking the Conservative Government rather as an Opposition.

The Conservative strategy was to hold broadly to their policies and only to be diverted in the face of absolute necessity. In practice, they held fairly steadily to this course, despite considerable pressure from their supporters to spend more time attacking their opponents.

They refused the challenge by Callaghan for a confrontation with Margaret Thatcher. It took some courage and much thought to do this, but in the event, was judged right as such a confrontation towards the end of a Labour campaign which in truth was beginning to flag might have given Labour just the lift they needed by distracting attention from policies to personalities.

There had been much debate as to the line to be taken by the Conservatives towards the Unions. In the event, the attack by the Unions with threats of confrontation never really materialised and the Conservative Party despite some criticism from its own supporters, emerged from the campaign with very little criticism of the Unions beyond its carefully phrased policies set out in the Manifesto.

They started deliberately later than the Labour Party, but managed to finish more strongly. The draft Economist article (Appendix 'H') which was never, of course, printed, is a good illustration of what could have been said about them if they had lost.

For future occasions, I still think that a campaign should be fairly tightly structured so that changes can be taken for considered reasons only and the main line resumed at the earliest possible date. The broad line for this planning is shown at Appendix 'I' .

THE ANALYSIS

We arranged for a survey analysis of the Election to be made immediately it was concluded. Appendix 'J'.

Lord Thorneycroft
July 1979

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PT/SO

20th June 1978

A PAPER BY THE RT.HON. LORD THORNEYCROFT

INTRODUCTION

1. A great deal of work has gone into policy formation both in the Research Department and The Centre for Policy Studies.

The basis for any proposals must be the themes developed in these organisations and in The Right Approach, and The Right Approach to the Economy. The problem is now one of selection, emphasis and the tone of voice rather than the origination of new policy.

2. This paper deals therefore with the priorities for the input of strategy into planning and communications for the pre Election and Election period. It does not attempt to spell out policies in detail or to refer to all of them but rather to suggest which ones should be emphasised; which may prove conterproductive; and to indicate where differences of view may arise and where decisions still need to be taken. The request for a decision is indicated by a line in the margin.

OBJECTIVE

3. The objective must be to maximise the number of votes for the Conservative Party. For this purpose useful information can be drawn from the ORC surveys as well as individual reports from the organisation both as to the type of voters likely to vote Conservative, as to the issues in which maximum interest is being aroused, and as to the publics view of our approach to a particular problem compared to that of Labour. This information can be summarised as follows.

TARGET AREA FOR VOTES

4. It is important to identify the target area we aim at in formulating our policies, in the language of our presentation and in our publicity and public relations generally.

The indications are that the existing Conservative vote should be brought out in maximum numbers. The Organisation is working at full pressure to this end. The problem here is one of organisation rather than policy and it is not considered that upon this occasion at least any special policy initiatives are required to attract this vote. Plainly we must avoid offending Conservative voters but it would seem wise to place the main emphasis outside the field of our own convinced supporters - if they don't vote Conservative this time they never will.

5. The October 1974 Liberal voter is plainly an important target. An ORC poll conducted for ITN on the day of the Ilford North by-election found that of those interviewed who had voted Liberal in October 1974, 46 per cent voted Conservative in the by-election, 35 per cent Liberal and 17 per cent Labour.

We prefer however a rather more pessimistic interpretation of our Survey evidence and would suggest that one in four of the October 1974 Liberal voters have been switching to voting Conservative.

6. The Labour vote is also vulnerable. In a number of by-elections it has switched to the Conservatives in large numbers. In the by-elections in Workington, Walsall North, Birmingham Stechford and Ashfield we won the seats by gaining the support of large number of ex-Labour voters. For example, in Birmingham Stechford ORC found that 14 per cent of those individuals who voted for us in the by-election had voted Labour in October 1974. However, at the risk of stating the obvious, by-elections are not General Elections and we will not be achieving the swings we obtained in such seats as Ashfield in the next General Election.

7. For an overall majority of one over all other parties in the House, we require a swing (from Labour) of 3.6 per cent. However, for an effective working majority (of say 20), we require a swing (from Labour) of 4.7 per cent. The achievement of such a swing would equal our best performance of all post-war elections, that of 1970 when we achieved a 4.7 per cent swing (from Labour).

8. The important fact with regard to the Liberal and Labour voters who can be swung to the Conservatives is that they probably hold views identical with the Conservative Party but need persuasion before identifying themselves with that Party to the extent of voting for it. They appear to include a substantial element of skilled workers.

9. To summarise - we face a situation in which anyone who could remotely call themselves Conservative requires above all else to be identified and organised to vote.

This is the purpose for example of the National Membership Campaign organised for the Summer and it is intended to give this a high priority not only for the new members it will recruit but for the impetus it will help to sustain during the summer months.

10. An important and volatile additional vote is however necessary if an adequate majority is to be achieved. Consideration needs therefore to be given to the interests and susceptibilities of these important groups. Care needs to be taken not to alienate them.

It is noteworthy that our opponents are taking quite exceptional steps to prevent some sections of their own Party expressing views likely to alienate much the same middle of the road opinions.

11. A decision should be made approving or otherwise the broad choice of targets outlined above.

THE ISSUES

12. The 'league' table below shows the issues the electorate thought most important (it is taken from our latest General Political Survey) and shows the percentage thinking (a) the issue is the most important facing the Government and (b) thinking a Conservative Government would deal well with the problem, and (c) thinking the Labour Government has dealt well with the problem.

	<u>% of electorate saying issue the most important facing the Government</u>	<u>Conservatives would deal well with issues</u>	<u>Labour has dealt well with issue</u>
	%	%	%
Unemployment	54	53	38
Rising Prices	42	55	42
Controlling immigration	32	74	25
Maintaining law and order	32	74	37
The level of taxation	25	56	34
Helping old people	18	70	68
Dealing with Trade Unions	17	33	53
Providing better education	14	70	34
Making Britain more prosperous	14	64	36
The housing problem	11	53	34
Managing North Sea Oil to help the country	10	54	42
Improving Britain's foreign trade	9	67	35
Dealing with the Common Market	7	64	39
Maintaining Britain's defences	6	66	27
Keeping the cost of mortgages down	4	54	56
Improving the system of government in Scotland and Wales	1	33	20

13. Unemployment followed by prices remain the two most worrying problems for the electorate. These, in our latest General Political Survey (May 1978) were followed (in order of importance) by controlling immigration, maintaining law and order and the level of taxation. Much further down the list as issues of concern (again in order of importance) we found helping old people, dealing with the trade unions, providing better education, making Britain more prosperous and the housing problem. It is interesting to note that such issues as maintaining Britain's defences, dealing with the Common Market, keeping the cost of mortgages down and improving the system of government in Scotland and Wales came very low on the list of issues the electorate regard as important.

Of the eleven leading issues of concern to the electorate (see table above for details), we had a lead on perceived competence on dealing with them all, with the notable exception of 'dealing with the trade unions'. However, in the majority of cases, our lead was small, with the notable exception (among the top eleven issues) of 'maintaining law and order', and controlling immigration which itself raises problems in certain constituencies in regard to coloured voters which are dealt with later in this paper.

14. Perhaps the single most worrying finding to come from our opinion research programme in recent years is one arising from our General Political Survey (May 1978) in which we found that the electorate feels that the present Labour Government has handled the economy well in view of world conditions and the problems they faced on taking over. It is worrying that the argument that Labour have handled the economy so well that they deserve another chance is one that commended itself in particular to less committed Conservative and Liberal voters as well as to the great mass of Labour's own supporters. We must, I feel, assume that Labour is aware of its strength in this area and will be exploiting its advantages in both the run-up to the next election campaign and in the campaign itself. We cannot yet judge the impact of recent events.

SENSITIVE AREAS

15. It is arguable that we are likely to win the Election provided only that we do not lose it. We cannot therefore afford too many losing themes. For this purpose it is important to remember what are the target voters to whom we are addressing ourselves and to reach agreement on what a sensitive area is.

16. In considering what areas are sensitive as being likely to alienate part or parts of the target vote one must not suggest that such areas are necessarily ruled out of debate altogether. They may be forced upon us or colleagues may collectively decide that their introduction is essential for some other purpose. They are however unlikely election winners and fall into a category of what might be described as high risk policies - in general they require Shadow Cabinet approval before being included for high priority treatment in our strategy for Communication or before being launched by individual members of the Shadow Cabinet.

17. We might all have our own list of sensitive areas. In drawing it up we should, I think, include issues not essential to the winning of an election and yet likely to be divisive among colleagues. I would suggest that it should include:-

- (1) Concentrated attack upon the Trade Union present attitudes.
- (2) Widespread breaking up of the Public Sector. -
- (3) Large scale sacking of Civil Servants.
- (4) Unqualified assertions that the ruthless application of monetary techniques would provide an answer to our problems.
- (5) The swift removal of all crutches from all lame ducks.
- (6) The elimination of all special intervention to create employment.
- (7) Hardline immigration policies going beyond those outlined by Mr Whitelaw.
- (8) The more dramatic themes concerned with law and order such as steps towards restoring capital punishment.
- (9) Unguarded pledges about Referenda.
- (10) Pledges on the wholesale removal of the rating system. . . .
- (11) Comparisons between the Labour Party and the Nazi system. -

18. Whatever else may be said about these themes they are certainly in the field of high risk policies. All of them are either so likely to lose votes or embarrass other Conservatives as to be liable to prove counter productive. None of them are election winners.

The decision needed is that we seek to avoid statements on these topics (or such of them as we judge right) without clearance in the Shadow Cabinet and without prior warning so that preparation for defensive action can be taken.

We will of course be asked about some of these subject. Colleagues will however, find little difficulty in providing low key answers to such questions leaving the field clear for the presentation of our main policy priorities. The lines of some rather roughly drafted suggested answers are attached at Appendix B. The Trade Union issue is dealt with below.

THE TRADE UNION PROBLEM

19. Freedom for the individual, and increased productivity in industry will undoubtedly feature high among our aims. Some of the present practices of some Trade Unions are undoubtedly inimical to these aims. A real problem exists as to the extent to which we should challenge and condemn these practices.

The Trade Union problem goes of course deeper than individual restrictive practices. The Trade Union leadership has increasingly assumed a political rather than an industrial role. The view is therefore held by some that unless and until we are prepared to make an open and specific challenge to that role we shall only be playing with the great problems which will confront us when we are in office. Others hold, and hold equally strongly a contrary opinion. In their view an assault upon the role assumed by the Unions will inevitably be regarded by the Unions and indeed by nearly everybody as an assault upon the Trade Union movement and is likely to damage our chances in an election. The arguments on each side in this matter are set out in the Appendix A.

20. We have discussed a possible solution to this dilemma. It seems possible that it might be found along the lines of what we have called the "hull down position". An armoured Division has broadly the choice of advancing out into the desert and engaging in an open assault, sometimes with the sun in its eyes, or occupying a little higher ground sheltered by the reverse slope and shooting only when attacked.

This "hull down position" has obvious advantages.

21. On this approach the Conservative Party would refrain from opening an attack upon the role of the Unions and would concentrate upon the high ground of its own policies. Importantly it would concentrate on such themes as increasing productivity and going for a high wage/high productivity economy, maximum investment and so forth. It would answer questions such as how it could cooperate with the Unions in keeping wages down by replying that its object was *pari passu* with productivity to get wages up. What it stood for would so manifestly identify with the aims of the mass of Trade Union members that confrontation would not appear to be a meaningful conception.

If its policies were attacked it would defend them but it would not initiate hostilities.

22. Whatever line is taken it is vital that the Shadow Cabinet presents a united front. Jim Prior will presumably make any key note speech and it is important that what he says should immediately be supported.

23. A decision is needed and the sooner the decision is made and unity upon it demonstrated the better.

STRATEGY PRIORITIES

24. With these decisions out of the way it is possible to turn to the positive side of deciding on our priorities.

The rest of this paper is concerned with the state of play on those topics which might be selected for a high priority. A decision is needed as to whether they are the right ones or whether others should be included.

LABOUR RECORD

25. It is said with some truth that the electorate turns Governments out rather than puts Governments in. The Labour Party will fight neither on their record nor their programme. It is therefore important that we expose both fully. We need to hammer away at Labours record. They must not get away with the fact that thanks to defeat in by-elections, the loss of an overall majority and the pressures of the I.M.F. they are performing rather less disastrously at the end of the period than at the beginning. "Give us" says Mr Healey "a majority and we will give you real Socialism".

26. We shall do our best with this in speeches, leaflets, cards for canvassers, advertising and television. Some members of the team might usefully be allocated to this task.

CONSERVATIVE THEMES ->

27. The main issues and the state of play upon them are set out below. Most constituencies have in addition to the main national issues one or more subsidiary issues of their own. In the case of the critical seats these have been identified and steps are being taken to give them appropriate attention. This paper is however concerned with main issues only.

28. Apart from the policies which we have already agreed or will agree upon there is an important decision to be made as to the tone of voice with which we approach our programme. Mrs Thatcher has expressed this as a "change of direction without extremism". This might well be a central theme. The country is not looking for a revolution nor an irreversible lurch to the right. It is tired of irreversible lurches in any direction. Nor would it really welcome a mass of new legislation; it is suffering from a glut. It looks for quietness, commonsense and an understanding of its problems.

The arrogance of Mr Healey has no doubt added to these sentiments. We should look like sensible experienced undoctinaire managers taking over a concern which is in deep trouble but which we are confident can be put right.

29. Above all we need to stress the importance of gradualness. We can't alter everything in quick time. An attempt to do so could raise real fears of unemployment. Investment is a slow process. We have to speak for a period of a Parliament rather than a first hundred days.

ECONOMIC POLICIES

All experience shows that unless we win the economic argument we shall find it very hard to win the election. What is it about?

30. Top of the list are grouped the economic policies straddling the issues of jobs, prices, taxation and the Unions. As already noted there is some evidence that we are not as strong on economic issues as we should be and that Labour's position on them (at least until recent events whose impact we cannot judge) has been improving.

31. Labours relative success in presenting their case on economic policies is a remarkable achievement. A party that has doubled unemployment and halved the value of the pound should not do so well. They have achieved this in part by linking wage restraint with lower inflation and relating Conservative policies with loss of jobs. Conservatives have been linked too much with what appear to the public to be academic arguments about monetarist versus interventionist techniques and have rightly or wrongly gained a reputation for being divided.

32. The policies set out in The Right Approach and The Right Approach to the Economy provide a sound basis for policy. We need, however, to argue our case in ever simpler terms and to show a degree of unity which we have not yet achieved in the public eye. Lines need to be finalised in regard to cuts in Government expenditure and Government waste. Much work has been done in the Research Department and the Centre for Policy Studies and a more robust approach appears to be emerging.

33. In essence this approach argues that we are unproductive over wide areas of the economy from cars to steel, to chemicals and engineering. That we remain competitive only by paying some of the lowest wages and salaries in Europe. That our object should be to raise wages *pari passu* with productivity. That productivity can only be secured through the restoration of differentials, the lowering of direct taxes, the increase of profitability and investment. Assets must be put behind British workers on the same scale as their competitors. They deserve the tools for the job.

34. We need to decide on the line suggested or some other line and really press it home in simple forthright terms and get the CBI and the Institute of Management to back us.

35. Our policies on tax are well documented and popular. Get direct taxes down is basically an election winner. We need to discuss and perhaps resolve any differences as to the stress if any to be placed on such themes as tax credit schemes. There can be no doubt that "lower direct taxes" is the more comprehensible and popular proposal.

36. There is some difference in emphasis on job creation. Some place the greater weight of importance on our general economic policy and condemn the Government for the jobs they have destroyed.

The combined effect of price control, heavy taxation, both direct and capital, legislation such as the Employment Protection Act, and the torrent of regulations - all on top of the underlying problems of inflation, and of frequent trade union obstruction of new ventures - has been to destroy many jobs and to discourage small and medium firms from expanding and new firms from being brought into being.

The jobs that could have been - if tax policy, for instance, were different and if the other obstructions were eased - far exceed in number the jobs that the Government claims to have rescued.

TES may have rescued 300,000 jobs - if you ignore the jobs destroyed in the process - but Labour policy has aborted or destroyed a vastly larger number of jobs that could have been.

37. Others, while accepting this, argue that in the real world an element of job creation by direct intervention will still be necessary. Studies are proceeding in regard to youth employment and the bridge between school and adult life. Probably both approaches have a part to play. A view is needed on these matters.

38. LAW AND ORDER

The maintenance of law and order is an issue on which we have a substantial lead over the Labour Party in the opinion polls. Most surveys suggest that this subject is rated highest of any of the non economic issues. Our policies have been set out clearly in a number of speeches including the very effective one by David Howell at the Central Council meeting. We must obviously highlight this issue in any pre Election advertising and in Party Political Broadcasts during the Campaign. There can be no compromise with crime. However, there is a danger that we could appear too shrill (a danger which our spokesmen have so far avoided) and that proposals might be advanced which split the Party. Therefore the sooner we can resolve the situation on the proposed capital punishment referendum the better. The fact that a solid block of criminal activity is to be 'found' in the 10 to 16 year old age group indicates the need for policies affecting this group.

39. EDUCATION

We have a large lead over Labour on this issue, although the latest ORC survey suggested that it was only regarded as the eighth most important subject. But it does have considerable appeal and our position is clearly in line with the views of the public. Indeed, we could probably make more of our advantages in this area, emphasising in particular the raising of educational standards.

40. HOUSING

We have a comfortable lead on this subject but it comes some way down the list of important issues in the latest ORC survey. However, it gives us good ammunition for making inroads into the vote on the council house estates.

The sale of council houses remains a very popular issue. We must build this up again and we should also have something positive to say about the tenants' charter for those who do not want to buy their own home.

There seems to be some real doubt as to what should be said about mortgage rates. There is also need for clarity on what statements if any should be made about the kind of terms on which Council Houses would be sold under a Tory Administration. We need not make great promises but we do need to know what line to take. Vigorous presentation of our scheme for providing help with the deposit on a house might also attract some of the young marrieds.

41. IMMIGRATION

Our policies are well documented and presented. They are in general well accepted by the white population and have for the most part avoided condemnation as extremist. Indeed, the main attack upon them seems to be that they obviously do not avoid the increase in population from natural causes. Faced with the fact that our policies are more comprehensible and acceptable than Labour's with the white population, Labour has concentrated on beating up as much popularity as possible among the black population. They have done this with cynical disregard for race relations. The Labour technique has been quite simple and is unrelated to any complex policy point. They are simply telling the blacks that if we are elected they will be thrown out. We must attempt to correct this by advertising in the ethnic press as well as other means. There is also some evidence that we are doing better in those areas where Conservative Associations have taken real trouble with the ethnic minority groups. This is being pursued.

42. SOCIAL SERVICES

Basically we have more to offer than the Labour Party but still have a reputation of being hard-faced.

The Conservative approach to Social Services is different from that of the State monopoly favoured by left wing theory. Individual responsibility must come first. Incentives must be restored. It must be made really worthwhile for a man to seek employment and support himself and his family not simply a marginal advantage. The family itself must be regarded as a fundamental aspect of the quality of life and the State must stop raiding its resources and damaging its capacity to look after its own members. Local communities must be helped to find a sense of responsibility and individuals encouraged to feel that they belong to them, a feeling difficult to arouse in regard to the huge bureaucracies which have grown up recently. The extent to which the resources of the whole community can be tapped through the use of volunteers is well illustrated in Sheila Moore's recent pamphlet "We are richer than we think".

The State Social Services can then be regarded as a final safety net to ensure that those in real need for help can secure it. The Health Service needs both trimming by the removal of a tier in its administration and financing either through private hospital beds or additional use of insurance schemes. Only a thriving capitalist economy can afford the social services we want.

Somehow we must manage to project these themes, upon which much work has been done, in a manner which carries more conviction and relate them more particularly to the old people and to those waiting to go into hospital.

ELECTION CAMPAIGN AND RUN UP

43. The purpose of developing strategic priorities is to make sure that they are fed into the plans for the pre-election and election period. In the case of the election plan this is drawn up by the Campaign Committee in the Central Office in consultation with the Leader's Office. Decisions on this paper, and particularly on which issues to select, will greatly assist in the finalisation of that plan. In the pre-election period strategic priorities are equally important for the programme of activities now in hand and planned for the months ahead.

In broad terms this programme embraces all forms of communication.

In particular it includes, speeches and special interest meetings by Shadow Ministers, a variety of publications including pamphlets and shorter documents on the lines of the very successful tax cards used recently; seminars on a number of topics, Party Political Broadcasts, a Poster Campaign planned for August and September; and an agreed programme of advertising.

In making plans for the summer and early autumn it is necessary to make an assumption about the date of an election. It is of course possible that the Prime Minister may hang on. It seems however probable that the developing pressures may ensure an Autumn Election. A final view might be taken in the light of the by-election results in Penistone and Moss Side. Our plans are now based on a probable October date.

Details are set out in Appendix B.

Approval is asked for them.

A discussion is invited on the choice of themes.

On the basis of that discussion we can base our priorities, emphasis and tone of voice in Communications whether by speeches, pamphlets, or PPBs during the next few months, and hopefully, in the Election period. No doubt many other issues and policies will be involved but what is vitally needed is an agreed backbone to the debate.

In the event of agreement on priorities and in the light of the discussion it is proposed that the selected policies be polished in direct discussion between the Shadow Ministers concerned and the Leader and the relevant decisions used in briefing our Advertising Agency and others concerned with the process of pre-election and election planning.

PT/SO

20th June 1978

APPENDIX "A"

THE CASE FOR RAISING THE ISSUE OF THE PRESENT ROLE
OF THE TRADE UNIONS

Our economy will be in the intensive care unit for a good five years before we will be able to say, with any confidence, that it is out of danger and that permanent recovery is under way.

Over the next two or three years, as inflation rises again, we will be walking a tightrope. A great deal will depend on whether government, trades unions and management, who between them carry the real responsibility for what has happened, have a shared understanding of the task and a shared purpose in carrying it out.

But when we talk about this need for a shared purpose, a real partnership, we come face to face with a problem which simply cannot be swept under the carpet. The problem is this; the trades union movement is linked to the Labour Party, a constitutional link which is virtually unique in the western world.

Our largest unions are pledged by their constitutions to work for the removal of the market economy and its replacement with socialism.

How does a movement with such ideological commitments enter into a strong and constructive partnership with any government, Labour or Conservative, which is trying to rebuild Britain as a competitive market economy in the free world?

If our economic condition was less fragile, we could perhaps continue to tiptoe diplomatically around this problem. But it is too late now for that. Each partner in the programme of recovery must know where the others stand. We are not challenging the constitutional link between the union movement and the Labour Party. It is a historic fact that it has many proud achievements behind it. We defend, absolutely, the right of anyone, trades unionist or not, to work for a socialist state if that is what he genuinely wants. But the question remains; how should the trades union leadership respond to a democratically elected government which believes, quite unambiguously, that socialist policies, practised by past Labour governments, have been disastrous for our economic and social health?

This is now the central issue for Britain, and we cannot shirk it. Rebuilding Britain as a free economy is a tremendous task and those who are not with us in that task, must be against us.

THE CASE AGAINST RAISING THE ISSUE OF THE PRESENT ROLE OF
THE TRADE UNIONS

We are concerned with the winning of an Election. We have some good policies and the electorate is probably ready to remove the present Government and give the Conservatives a chance. We need, however, to obtain support not only from our own convinced supporters but from voters outside these ranks. These new supporters are in part from the Liberals and in part from ex Labour voters. Quite a lot of them will be skilled workers and many of them will be Trade Unionists.

The one thing which may deter these voters is a belief that the Conservative Party is ready to fight a pitched battle with the Trade Union movement.

Their attitude is dictated by a number of factors:

1. Any severe criticism of the attitude of the Trade Unions will be immediately built up by the Labour Party and by the TUC as a renewal of confrontation.
2. The loyalty to the Trade Union movement among its members goes very deep. At present they are quite ready to criticise it but a sudden assault upon it might well rally them to a cause which they and their families have supported for generations.

The attitude of the target voters referred to above could well spread among other voters whom we would normally regard as reasonably secure. Industry and commerce might well prefer that with a hung Parliament they have come to regard as a relatively secure existence with Mr Callaghan rather than run the risk of a large scale industrial strife under the Conservatives.

Whilst it must be accepted that many of the things which the Trade Unions do are wrong, there are better ways of dealing with the situation than battering away at them from the Opposition Benches. Why attack the enemy's strongest position from a position of weakness? If we want to alter things they will undoubtedly have to be altered slowly and this will be better done from the strong position of a democratically elected Government.

We face now a summer during which a number of Trade Union Conferences will take place which will be highly publicised and may well include attacks on Conservatives and warnings about confrontation. The last thing we wish to do is to add fuel to these flames.

APPENDIX "B"

Suggested answers on sensitive area questions

THE PUBLIC SECTOR

First priority will be to make a success of the public sector. It is vital to the economy of this country that those industries which are in the public sector should be efficiently and, where possible profitably, run. We shall not extend it. We shall certainly take any sensible opportunities which may occur of enabling private capital to participate in some parts of it.

THE SIZE OF THE CIVIL SERVICE

The fault does not lie with the Civil Servants, it lies with the vast increase in Government intervention in everybody's affairs which has taken place under successive Socialist Governments. Our aim will be to reduce Government intervention and as it is reduced we shall no doubt gradually arrive at a situation where fewer Civil Servants need to be recruited.

Monetary Techniques

Control of the money supply is undoubtedly an important factor in the running of the economy. Even the Labour Party have at long last discovered that. It is, however, only one part of the problem and we shall devote ourselves by all available means to increase incentives, lower taxes and restore employment.

Crutches for Lame Ducks

Wholesale use of taxpayers money for the support of bankrupt businesses is not helpful to the national economy. It may maintain some jobs but often at the expense of losing others. We shall move in this field with caution but our aim will be to reinforce success.

Special Intervention to Create Employment

In the main we shall rely on our progressive economic policies to restore productivity and jobs. We shall, however, give special attention to the economic problems that the Labour Party have created in the field of Youth unemployment and use any measures open to us to ease the difficulties in this area.

Hardline Immigration Policies

We stand firmly behind the policies announced by Mr Whitelaw. We believe that all men are equal in their status and their dignity and we are wholly opposed to compulsory repatriation policies.

Referendum restoring Capital Punishment

In the field of Law and Order our priorities are clear. We wish to concentrate not on the issues of capital punishment but on enabling old people to go and collect their pensions without molestation and without finding their gas meters have been robbed when they return.

Referenda generally

Referenda may have a part to play in our future constitution and we shall be making arrangements for studies in the field of constitutional reform. Referenda are not a substitute for sensible decisions by Government on matters of high priority at the present time.

The Rating System

Rating is a bad tax. Nevertheless its wholesale removal in the immediate future is not a practical possibility and we shall be concentrating the whole of our energies upon the more important field of the lowering of direct taxation.

Comparison with the Nazi System

It is unnecessary to compare the Labour Party with anything. It is bad enough in itself and another term of Labour Government is likely to prove disastrous to the future prosperity of the British people.

APPENDIX 'C'

PUBLICITY

Saatchi and Saatchi will be carrying out

- (a) A National Poster Campaign during August and September.
- (b) A National Advertising Campaign. The extent of this will in broad terms be known by the time this paper is discussed.
- (c) Advertising in certain specialist sections of the press including womens papers and the ethnic press.

SPECIAL CAMPAIGNS

A National Housing Campaign will be run under Mr Heseltine. The Campaign against the Nationalisation of the Construction Industry will continue under Mr Reginald Eyre.

An Economic Issues Campaign will be run under Sir Geoffrey Howe.

PUBLICATIONS

The CPC will be publishing 4 pamphlets in July/August. Another 3 are already planned for August/September. The Research Department will issue the usual publications and other independent publications are due e.g. "We are Richer than we Think" (Sheila Moore, Andrew Rowe, Lynda Chalker)

SEMINARS/CONFERENCES

Mr Prior will lead an unemployment Conference in Liverpool (31st August). The SBB is holding a Conference in Birmingham (July) and there will be an Arts Seminar under Norman St. John Stevas also in July presented in a series of Conferences in the major cities (the first took place in Manchester on 19th June). There will be an Energy Conference in the Festival Hall in September under Tom King and Neil Macfarlane.

APPENDIX "C" (cont)

SPEAKERS TOURS

110 one/two day tours by members of the Front Bench are being arranged between mid-June and October. In addition 165 single speaking engagements have so far been arranged by the Speakers Department for this period.

RECRUITING CAMPAIGN

The Party is organising a full-scale National Recruitment Campaign. The YC's will be running a National 20-week mutual aid campaign, and in the early autumn the FCS will be recruiting among the new intake.

SPECIAL EVENTS

The YC's are organising a rally in Trafalgar Square on 20th August to co-incide with the 10th anniversary of the invasion of Czechoslovakia. The Party is associating closely with the celebrations of Universal Suffrage. On the 1st/2nd July the National Local Government Advisory Committee is holding a policy meeting in Oxford (speakers - Mr Maude, Lady Young, Mr Heseltine, Mr Rossi). There will be a CTU presence at the T.U.C. Conference (4 - 8 September), and the CTU's will hold a fringe meeting.

ELECTION POINTS

1. It might be worth someone writing a paper which attempts to describe a working model of the general election. It may be rather speculative in places, but we've just been through an election and we ought therefore to have something approaching a 'a general theory of general elections'. The point is not that such a model may be inaccurate but that it can't be as misleading as no theory at all. The insights which will have come to different people as a result of recent experience will be forgotten unless they are incorporated in some sort of a paper now.
2. Once such a model is sketched out, it may be easier then to decide whether, next time, a more formal attempt at a game plan is desirable. In the recent election, I believe that it would have been useful - especially if it was based on a 'general theory' paper written immediately after the 1974 election. The game plan could then have addressed the following questions: Is there a general pattern or cycle of events, moods and swings to be expected during the course of the campaign? Is there general agreement that, in the last analysis, all elections turn on fairly precise issues (eg how well the last government did on inflation, living standards, unemployment)? The point here really is to see what if any actual correlation between election results and economic performance exists, rather than examining the theories which existed at the time. In the light of the foregoing, what sort of game plan - whether or not explicitly developed - are Labour likely to adopt? Should our approach 'mark' theirs or should we deliberately sound and look quite different? Can we tempt them into folly which we can then turn to our advantage? Can we have prepared and agreed but secret initiatives which we release during the campaign? They would have to be substantial, not just gimmicks and this of course makes it more difficult for them to be surprises.
3. As you know, it is my view that one does need such a game plan and that there should be a formal reappraisal and modification of it at one week intervals. To do that sort of stocktaking effectively, we would have to break out of the present pattern of having to ask everybody to meetings, for fear of hurting their feelings. In my view that is absolutely hopeless and will have to be changed if we are to improve performance next time. I don't mean that the people at those meetings were superfluous; they were not, every one of them had some important nugget of information to impart. But we do want to differentiate between information gathering and exchange, operational coordination (both of these requiring fairly large and probably overlapping committees) and tactical appraisal which needs smaller problem-solving teams making use of the information that has come in via the bigger committees. In the last election, for example, such a conscious reappraisal might have allowed us to turn Labour's lies and innuendos positively to our advantage. By that I mean not simply neutralising them by rebuttal (which we had managed to do to some extent in the final week, but never to the point where we were able to undo all their damage) but to use those lies etc to so discredit Labour that subsequent messages from us would be more readily accepted while their messages were increasingly disregarded. Their mud-slinging, in other words, should have been used to make them lose ground. Instead, they used it to make up lost ground. We did urge this strongly during the campaign and we were right.
4. That brings us to the next point which was the lack of coordination between the design of PEB's and the rest of the strategy. In the

event, the PEB's were pretty good. But the idea that they could be made in advance and then cobbled together from material in the can - and all this without any discussion about how the campaign was to be conducted, was asking for trouble and very nearly got it.

5. There will be many other wrinkles which must be got down on paper fast before people forget them. Otherwise each election campaign will simply serve to teach us how little we know about election campaigns. The learning process from campaign to campaign must be institutionalised (there may be a parallel activity for by-elections?) Two obvious ones occur to me. The first is the need (and this is really part of the first one week reappraisal) to discover whether or not the campaign is going to be presidential and if so to ensure that all the main points come from the Leader. As we saw at Labour's press conferences, Callaghan declined or deflected all questions addressed to him which did not fit his own game plan for the day. Second, we put too much effort into the Leader's major speeches, of which only a few points were normally reported, instead of having more short statements or apparently informal talks from her, each of which could have been used to make a particular 'point for the day'. Then the real effort of speechwriters etc could have been focussed on how to express that single point in breathtakingly new imagery and words so that it got the headline they wanted, instead of the massive production process of putting together a thirty minute speech with all the problems of structuring at the beginning and then getting each syllable right at the end. To me, that wasted a good deal of skilled time - though of course such speeches have to be made and they must be made to a proper standard. But they are only jumbo-sized matchsticks. They cannot on their own determine the outcome of the campaign.
6. Next time we must get the organisational thinking (CRD, Central Office CPS, CPRS Policy Unit etc) sorted out, staffing and so on before polling day because there's never the time to do it properly.

***post election



JOHN HOSKYNS
June 1979

CONTROL, LIAISON AND BRIEFING

- (i) The following morning timetable for the Leader, based upon 9.30 a.m. Media Conferences, has been agreed:

7.30 a.m.	Leave Flood Street for Research Department
7.40 a.m. - 9.15 a.m.	Media Conference briefing (including videotaped summary of highlights of previous night's broadcasts if required)
9.15 a.m.	Leave for Central Office
9.30 a.m. - 10.15 a.m.	Media Conference, plus interviews if Leader wishes
10.15 a.m. - 11.00 a.m.	Tactical Discussion at Central Office
11.00 a.m.	Leave for Area Tours (latest time to reach destination in order to meet deadline for 5.45 TV News)

- (ii) A variety of briefing will be available as the Leader requires:

- (a) Selected press cuttings the night before
- (b) A 20-minute videotaped digest of the previous day's television
- (c) An analysis of radio coverage
- (d) A digest of press coverage
- (e) An analysis of opinion research
- (f) A report on the state of the campaign in the constituencies and of opinions from the constituencies.
- (g) Short briefs (one side of the paper only) on likely questions. These to be prepared by the Research Department, some on the previous evening and some earlier that morning - and covering anticipated questions, suggested replies and supporting information.

- (iii) The subject for the day's Media Conference will be known. Basic points for inclusion will be prepared in advance and a press release drafted incorporating our own proposals, an attack on our opponents and a response to our opponents' anticipated attacks on us.

The text of the press release will have to be finished by 8.30 a.m. ready for distribution at the Media Conference.

- (iv) Those invited to the Media Conference Briefing at 7.40 a.m. will include:

Lord Thorneycroft
Mr. Maude (responsible for final draft of press release)
Spokesman of the day
Mr. Howell (drafting for the Leader on tour)
Leader's PPS of the day
Mr. Ridley and Research Department staff as necessary
Michael Dobbs (CRD Officer accompanying Leader on tour)
Mr. Reece and Publicity Department staff as necessary.

(v) Those invited to the Tactical Discussion at the end of the Media Conference at 10.15 a.m. will include:

Mr. Whitelaw
Lord Thornycroft
Mr. Atkins
Lord Carrington
Mr. Maude
Lady Young
Directors and members of the Leader's and Chairman's staff as required.

Arrangements can be made in advance for any Front Bench Spokesmen not present to telephone in at a given time.

(vi) Other control and liaison meetings will be held as follows:

11.50 a.m. - 12 noon Chairman's consultation with Scotland (following media conferences in London and Scotland)

12 noon - 12.30 p.m. Broadcasting and Press Meeting (Room A) to discuss:

Forthcoming Programmes
PPB's
Any other business in connection with broadcasting or the press.

Present:

The Chairman
Deputy Leader, as available
Chief Whip
Lord Carrington
Mr. Maude
~~Mr. Halligan~~
Mr. Bell (Saatchi's)
Mr. Britto
Mr. Hanvey (ORC)
Mr. Houston
Mr. Howarth
Mr. Reece
Mr. Ridley
Miss Stocken
Mr. Lindsey (Secretary)
Others as appropriate

12.30 p.m. - 1.00 p.m. Opinion Research Meeting (Chairman's Office (as necessary))

Agenda

Presentation and discussion of new findings
Discussion of further research to be commissioned

Present:

Chairman
Mr. Maude
Mr. Bell (Saatchi's)
Mr. Garner

Mr. Hanvey (ORC)
Mr. Howarth
Mr. Reece
Mr. Ridley
Mr. Rowe
Mr. Britto (Secretary)

1.15 p.m. - 2.15 p.m. Working Lunch (St. Stephen's Club)

Agenda

Chairman's report on the campaign
Guidance for speakers and broadcasters
Action taken since previous meeting
Reports on other Parties' Press Conferences
Next day's Media Conference
Any Other Business

Those present will include:

Chairman
Mr. Maude
Mr. Bell (Saatchi's)
Mr. Britto
Mr. Garner
Mr. Hanvey (ORC)
Miss Hooper
Mr. Howarth
Mr. Lindsey
Mr. Reece
Mr. Ridley
Mr. Rowe
Mr. Ryder
Mr. Wolfson
Mr. Walker
Media Conference Briefing Officer
Research Department Officers covering
Labour and Liberal Press Conferences
Miss Varley (Secretary)

Further times will be arranged in the afternoon and evening of each day for consultation between the Leader, Deputy Leader and the Chairman.

THE LEADER

(i) LEADER'S TOURS

(a) Programme for Tour

1. A summary of the programme for the Leader's Tours, as currently agreed, including known media engagements.
2. A detailed version, covering specimen days and showing the style of the tour.

These are based on a 9.30 a.m. Media Conference at Central Office, allowing for departure by 11 a.m. at the latest.

All engagements will be geared for maximum media coverage.

(b) Composition of Party

The Leader's Party will comprise:

The Leader
Mr. Dennis Thatcher
PPS
Research Officer (Michael Dobbs)
Press Officer (Gerry Mulligan)
Tour Organiser (Roger Boaden)
Personal Secretary
Detectives

This may be supplemented on overnight stays by a further member of the Leader's staff (possibly Mr. Howell) and/or another personal secretary.

(c) Travel, accommodation and personal requirements

1. Travel

A combination of air, road and rail will be used as appropriate:

(i) By Air:

A 45-seat Handley Page Dart Herald Aircraft will be chartered from British Island Airways (BIA) and will operate in and out of Gatwick. Normal commercial rates will be paid for the hire of the aircraft and the travelling press, who will accompany the Leader's party in the aircraft, will be charged a proportion of the costs.

(ii) By Road:

Wherever practical, two coaches supplied by Wallace Arnold will be used. The lead coach will be converted into a travelling office for use by Mrs. Thatcher's party and will be fitted with two-way radio communication into the GPO circuit. The second will be for the use of the accompanying press with some seats removed for equipment. For longer journeys three cars will be used for the Leader's party and the Leader's coach will rendezvous en route prior to the start of the Area tour.

(iii) By Train:

The train will be used for journeys to and from Gatwick/Victoria and on some longer journeys to Areas. Compartments will be reserved for use by the Leader's party.

2. Accommodation and personal requirements

(i) Base hotels will be used on tour as appropriate and bookings made by Central Office Area Agents.

(ii) The following accommodation will be reserved:

Suite for use by Mr. and Mrs. Thatcher
3 rooms nearby for use by Leader's political staff, clerical staff and Area secretarial back-up team dealing with handouts etc.

(iii) Where overnight stops are involved, sufficient bedrooms for staff and travelling press will be reserved.

(iv) Areas will arrange for a hairdresser and a make-up person to be available as required.

(d) Liaison Arrangements

1. Hotels will be selected which provide suitable accommodation and good communication facilities, including adequate telephone and telex facilities. An exchange line will be installed in the political office with a plan 7 extension to the Leader's sitting room, including loudspeaker facilities.
2. The Leader's coach will be fitted with two-way radio communication linked with the GPO circuit.
3. Whilst on tour, the programme will allow for regular private afternoon and evening telephone contact with the Chairman of the Party or with senior colleagues by direct telephone line from the hotel or a private room en route. A Fonadek amplifier will be carried to amplify telephone conversations.

4. Roger Boaden will arrange for copies of the detailed programmes for the principal Shadow Cabinet members to be carried on tour so that contact can be made direct as required. These will include addresses and telephone numbers where they can be contacted. Areas will organise a messenger service to convey urgent messages by hand either to the Leader's party or to Shadow Cabinet members whilst on tour. The use of beepers is being investigated.

(e) Briefing Arrangements

Details of the arrangements for the briefing of the Leader and the Chairman of the Party are given under section 4 "Control and Liaison System".

(f) Arrangements for Drafting Speeches, Statements and Articles

1. Michael Dobbs from Research Department will be on tour with the Leader's party and will have responsibility for speech drafts. He will have full back-up from the Research Department.
2. Additional secretarial assistance will be available at base hotels and will be provided from Area staffs.

(g) Security

The security of the Leader will be the responsibility of Special Branch and all concerned with the organisation of the tour must liaise closely with Mrs. Thatcher's detectives and, under their guidance, with the local police.

In principle, details of the Leader's tours will only be released to the press a few hours before the actual events and Central Office Agents must liaise closely with Mr. Garner regarding this aspect.

(h) Preparation of Halls, Platforms, etc.

1. Care will be taken to ensure good facilities for television and the press both at the larger and smaller meeting places and during tours.
2. Mr. Trowbridge will undertake a reconnaissance of the main halls and some of the smaller halls in advance to check platform arrangements, lighting, sound, press facilities etc. Arrangements may be necessary for the background decoration of platforms, using local labour.
3. Admission to the larger rallies will be by tickets issued in advance. Central Office Agents will arrange for the majority of tickets to be made available via constituency associations to supporters

but a strictly controlled number of tickets (of different colour) will be available to the general public on prior application. The general public will be seated at the rear of the hall.

4. Central Office Agents will be responsible for ensuring effective and efficient stewarding.
5. All speeches delivered by the Leader will be recorded on cassettes.

(i) Press and Media Arrangements

1. The Press Officer (Gerry Mulligan) will travel with the party on tour and will be responsible for media arrangements, handouts, etc. He will be accompanied by an assistant (probably a secretary) who will remain with the press corps on tour to deal with their travelling, hotel and other requirements.
2. The media will be contacted when an election seems likely to ascertain what facilities they require so far as staff accompanying the Leader's party is concerned. Any costs for accommodation or transport incurred as a result will be charged to the newspaper or media company concerned.
3. One of the Regional Publicity Officers will be available on tour to assist with press arrangements and to deal with the local production of handouts, etc.
4. Central Office Agents will arrange for office and secretarial facilities to be available at the base hotel and main stops en route so that handouts can be typed and duplicated. Staff available must include one person capable of operating a telex machine.
5. Special telephone arrangements for the media will be made where necessary.

(ii) LEADER'S OFFICE

(a) Location and Staffing

The Leader's office will be centred in the Central Office on the first floor (Rooms 101 to 104) as follows:

Room 101	Mrs. Thatcher
Room 102	Richard Ryder/Secretary
Room 103	Airey Neave
Room 104	Dorck Howe/Secretary
Room 109	Article writing team

Richard Ryder has surveyed the offices and the existing telephone facilities and they are adequate. They include several direct and/or night lines for easy communication.

(b) Speech Writing

The composition of the speech writing team has yet to be confirmed.

(c) Article Writing

The composition of the article writing team has yet to be confirmed.

When this has been done a series of draft articles are to be prepared in advance of the campaign.

(d) Public Correspondence

The public correspondence team will be centred in the Leader's Office at the House of Commons under the overall direction of Matthew Parris. His team will be supplemented by staff from Central Office as follows:

Alan Smith
Mrs. Susan Hewitt
Mrs. Gill Morrison

Mr. Smith and the Central Office team will require House of Commons passes. The Central Office postal services will be used for correspondence.

ORGANISATION DEPARTMENT

(i) Staffing

The allocation of responsibilities for all staff connected with the organisational aspects of the election will be as follows:

A.S. Garner	General overseeing of Central Office arrangements. Daily liaison with Area offices and collection of intelligence. Special problems of Areas, constituencies and candidates. Rear link for Leader's and Shadow Ministers' tours - problems or emergencies.
Miss J. Varley	Secretary, Working Lunch Chairman's tours (with Alan Howarth) Special projects.
Miss A. Hooper	Deputy to Director of Organisation Priority Removal Scheme, Postal Votes Critical Seats Campaign Joint Secretary, Questions of Policy Committee (responsible for distribution through Central Office).
O.C.D. Mitchell	Election Agents memoranda and guidance Election law and procedure Election insurance for constituencies Braille manifesto.
W.R. Henderson	Overall responsibility for General Office Central Office printing facilities and arrangements for despatch Election Agents' vacancies List of Election Agents and Committee rooms.
Roger Boaden	Leader's tours.
David Knapp) Enquiry office
Roger Pratt) Lists of dates for the count by
Miss R. Spencer) constituencies
Cecil Dawson (part-time)) Enquiries from overseas visitors.
Miss P. Stocken	Arrangements for speakers and speakers' campaign Liaison with Publicity Department re press list.
Alan Smith) Leader's election correspondence
Mrs. S. Hewitt) (working at the House of Commons)
Mrs. G. Morrison)
R.M. Bell	Attached to Publicity Department for special duties (i.e. poster campaign etc)
Roger Pratt	In addition to the Enquiry Office, to assist with administration of Leader's tours during Roger Boaden's absence.

S.R. Newman	Assisting with central financial appeal
David M. Smith	Acting as Election Agent in a constituency
G.F. Harper	Acting as Election Agent in a constituency

(ii) Advice and assistance to constituencies before the Election Campaign

(a) All Constituencies

1. The Election Agent's Manual and relevant election forms have been updated and most constituencies have already purchased supplies. Adequate stocks are in hand at Central Office. Most constituencies have purchased election envelopes.
2. Each Area has held or will hold training courses for Agents (particularly newly-qualified). An early edition of the Election Memoranda was circulated last September detailing a check list of pre-election preparations to be made by Agents.
3. Training Courses for Parliamentary Candidates in the critical seats have been held on an Area and National basis and the booklet "TIPS" has had a wide circulation. Courses for Constituency and Branch Officers will be started shortly as part of the project "Action in the 80s".
4. The Courier Express delivery system for literature was tried out in connection with the National Campaign last summer and worked well. Detailed arrangements for the despatch of literature have been completed.
5. All Areas have completed their plans for mutual aid and givers have been linked to receivers. Considerable assistance is already being given in many cases. The success of mutual aid will be a continuing priority.
6. A National Commitment Campaign was held from July to September 1978 to encourage the enrolment of new members and workers. Special literature was produced and many constituencies reported good results.
7. A Postal Vote Month will be held in March 1978. Special literature is being produced to encourage and help constituencies to have an all-out drive for postal votes.
8. A comprehensive Designs and Lay-out Book was circulated to constituencies in January 1978 to assist with the preparation of election literature. This was supplemented in September 1978. Plans for election literature will have to be kept up-to-date and drafts for election literature and posters made available as soon as an election is imminent.

(b) Critical Seats

The following services have or will be provided to critical seats:

1. Financial assistance to enable the employment of an Agent and adequate secretarial assistance (the vast majority now have qualified agents).
2. Leadership training for officers and workers and training for candidates and agents in election techniques.
3. Special assistance to increase the postal vote, contact new and young voters, etc.
4. Financial assistance to provide better literature impact.
5. Paid help with the postal vote campaign.
6. Free supplies of poster board and help with the production of posters and special literature.
7. A concentrated speakers' campaign.
8. Special assistance with publicity and press.
9. The establishment of a Critical Seats Unit at CRD to assist candidates and agents on matters of policy, political initiatives, etc.

(iii) Services to constituencies following announcement of election

(a) Candidates' Conference

It has been agreed with the Leader and the Chairman of the 1922 Committee that a Candidates' Conference should be held on Thursday D-21.

Those to be invited to include members of the 1922 Committee, Members of the House of Lords and adopted Conservative Candidates, together with the principal Officers of the National Union and the Central Office.

The programme to be as follows:

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| 12.30 p.m. | Buffet Lunch |
| 2.30 p.m. - 3.10 p.m. | Mrs. Thatcher (no questions)
"Issues and Strategy of Campaign" |
| 3.10 p.m. - 3.25 p.m. | Lord Thorneycroft
"Organisation and C.O. back-up" |
| 3.25 p.m. - 4.00 p.m. | Questions to Lord Thorneycroft
and Mr. Maude |
| 4.00 p.m. | Tea and biscuits. |

Detailed arrangements are set out in a note prepared by A.S. Garner and agreed by Mr. du Cann.

This would be preceded by a meeting of the Shadow Cabinet that morning (Thursday D-21).

(b) Notes for Election Addresses

If the Manifesto was not published by the time that candidates were preparing the copy for their election addresses, then duplicated notes to help with the preparation of election addresses would be produced by the Research Department for circulation to agents.

(c) Election Memoranda

Mr. Mitchell will be responsible for the regular despatch of Election Memoranda to candidates and agents.

Drafts will be kept up-to-date ready for despatch and a further check list of early arrangements will be circulated when the election again seems imminent.

(d) Priority Removal Scheme

The priority removal scheme will again be activated when an election seems imminent.

(e) Leaflets and Posters

Further thought needs to be given to the requirements of constituencies as far as election leaflets and posters are concerned and plans must be made ready.

Early sampling of poster and leaflet designs is vital as soon as the election is announced and, whilst the wording of leaflets and posters cannot be determined in advance, the style and format can be.

(f) The Manifesto

The Manifesto was in draft but copy would require bringing up-to-date. It would take about five working days to print and will be printed outside Central Office. Copies of the Manifesto will be circulated to Candidates and Agents and be ready, if possible, for publication on Friday D-20 at a special Press Conference, in order to catch that evening's television and press.

(g) Daily Notes

Research Department will again be responsible for the preparation of Daily Notes for Candidates and Agents and the first issue will be printed as soon as the campaign opens. They will incorporate speaking notes.

Arrangements will be made to have a "stop press" shortened edition ready on a Saturday in time to catch the 12 noon post - thereby ensuring six issues per week during the campaign.

(h) Questions of Policy

The Questions of Policy service will again be operated. Sandy Walker of Research Department will be responsible, with a Committee, for producing the "Questions of Policy" statements in connection with questionnaires from organisations and work is now proceeding on these. Prospective Candidates have already been written to asking them to forward to Mr. Walker copies of questionnaires which they may receive before the election.

Miss Hooper will act jointly with Mr. Walker and be responsible for the printing and despatch of the Questions of Policy to constituencies.

(i) Legal Advice

Legal advice either to Candidates or Agents or to the Publicity Department or Advertising Agents will be the responsibility of David Mitchell.

A legal advice service to constituencies is already operating.

(j) Insurance

Insurance services have been organised through Anthony Gibbs and a package deal for Agents is in existence..

(k) Policy Queries to Research and appointment of Area Information Officers

The pressure on the Research Department will be considerable and it will, as usual, help them if Areas can answer as many straightforward policy queries as possible.

Areas have been asked to appoint an Area Information Officer on a voluntary basis who will be available at the Area Office to answer queries from candidates. Research will provide suitable information for their use.

A special Information Room will be set up in Research Department - as at the last election - to deal with enquiries and it will naturally give priority to enquiries from Area Information Officers.

A letter about the role of the critical seats unit during the campaign will be circulated.

(1) Speaking Campaign

Speakers' Department asked Front Bench Spokesmen to provide dates on a D minus basis on which they would be able to undertake speaking engagements outside their constituencies. These have been processed and an election speakers programme has been compiled. This takes into account known media commitments and the Leader's tour. It aims at having at least one Shadow Minister in each Area each day.

Areas were notified of their provisional allocations last September and many have already made plans for their use.

Miss Stocken will keep in touch with Front Bench Spokesmen regarding their offers of dates and alert Areas to any changes in provisional plans as soon as they are known.

Speaking engagements and tours by Front Bench Spokesmen will be geared to media coverage.

(m) Intelligence Reports

Arrangements will be made for regular twice daily intelligence reports to be received from Central Office Agents and for this information to be fed in to the Tactical Committee.

This will include information both on political and organisational matters.

Areas will, in turn, arrange for the regular receipt of intelligence from Candidates and Agents.

Telex machines are already operating in all Area offices and in the Scottish office.

Conservative and Unionist Central Office

32 Smith Square Westminster SW1P 3HH Telephone 01-222 9000

Memorandum from: Director of Finance

To: The Chairman

Date: 24th May 1979

GENERAL ELECTION REPORT FINANCIAL (C.C.O.)

I attach my report on the activities and experience of the Finance Department during the General Election campaign.

I have set out the matters under the following headings:-

	<u>Paras</u>
Planning	1 - 3
Budgeting	4 - 6
Cash Flow	7 - 9
Monitoring	10 - 13
Post-election matters	14 - 15
Assessment	16 - 22
The Future	23
Conclusion	24

Planning

1. The nine months prior to the General Election campaign witnessed an unprecedented series of regular planning meetings covering all aspects of organisation, publicity, publications and tours. This was successful and essential.
2. The financial and administrative implications of the planning decisions were gleaned from these meetings and supplemented by a series of separate administration meetings held to deal specifically with personnel and office administration.
3. Each director and some of their senior staff were asked, at a series of bilateral meetings in October 1978 and again in January 1979, for details of the additional staff and other resources required exclusively for the Election. Details were collated and costed, to form the basis of the budget estimates.

Budgeting

4. The budget was finalised in the first week of April, covering all expenditure attributable to the campaign. A summary was sent to the Chairman and other officers. The funds were allocated in detail to each director and a separate budget statement, signed by the Deputy Chairman, was given to each director.

5. A separate budget code reference 071 was publicised in the office and a series of files opened in the Finance Department to record details of:
- (a) the planning stages,
 - (b) the budget estimates and assumptions,
 - (c) the final approved budget,
 - (d) specimen publications and literature produced,
 - (e) personnel and office policy decisions taken by Deputy Chairman (eg. election bonus basis),
 - (f) further budget allocations during the campaign,
 - (g) actual expenditure incurred.
6. A weekly update of the budget was supplied to the officers and notices of authority to incur additional expenditure were given to each director.

Cash Flow

7. In conjunction with the CBF, a cash flow forecast was prepared for the twelve months April 1979 to March 1980 at a time approximately ten days prior to Election day. This was handed to the Treasurer.
8. The objective of the cash flow forecast in this context was to report to the officers the funds available to finance peace-time office costs for the following twelve months, after allowance only for the initial general election budgeted expenditure.
9. The Election would have first call on any surplus revenue so disclosed. In addition, the officers would be aware of the moment (if reached) when further commitment of funds during the Election would begin to mortgage the future.

Monitoring

10. Throughout the campaign the Finance and Administration Departments monitored as far as possible the activities taking place within the Central Office, as to:
- (a) Temporary staff,
 - (b) Printed literature and publications,
 - (c) Bills and petty cash claims submitted for payment,
 - (d) Any other activities, goods deliveries, alcoholic drinks etc with a possible financial cost.
11. Times during the campaign when particular matters were pressing were:-
- (a) Early April - temporary staff, the numbers and their terms of employment,
 - (b) Mid April - publications costs, revenue derived therefrom and costs of excessive print orders, emergency distribution costs, and drinks supplies,
 - (c) End April - personal expenses, and additional equipment,
 - (d) Election day and Friday - temporary staff lay off, and profligate entertaining.

12. A weekly report of 'gross' cumulative publications costs was provided by the Promotions and Publications manager.
13. Finance department files kept from the previous General Election did not contain information of any value in anticipating the likely administrative course of the Election. Help was however obtained from senior staff present and responsible for administration at previous elections.

Post-election matters

14. Prior to Election day, meetings were held with the Deputy Chairman on such matters as:
- (a) General Election bonuses,
 - (b) the employment of staff in the ex-Leader's and Whips' secretariats,
 - (c) the employment of political advisers to Ministers,
- to determine policy and/or to take interim decisions pending future clarification.
15. Following Election day, an expected increase in the volume of work of the Finance Department was experienced throughout May in the areas of:-
- (a) Invoices and expense claims from suppliers and staff,
 - (b) Rendering statements to election agents of amounts due for publications and literature and then subsequent receipt of payments therefor,
 - (c) Payments to temporary staff of salaries, fees and overtime, and associated procedures for terminating employment,
 - (d) Calculation and payment of bonuses and overtime to permanent staff.

Assessment

16. During peacetime, overspending by departments is difficult to forestall because its occurrence only comes to light from monthly management accounts produced some weeks in arrears. Procedures to improve upon this situation are planned for the future.
17. The General Election, because of the procedures detailed above for prior identification and approval afforded the opportunity to intercept at the stage of ordering goods or services and if necessary rejecting the order if no budget allocation existed.
18. Nevertheless the General Election administration could not escape the effects of the widespread financial and administrative ill-discipline that is a feature of Smith Square, reaching anarchic dimensions in one department.

24th May 1979

19. This is principally due to a tendency by staff to try to bypass the proper procedures and authority for personnel recruitment, office services and the ordering of supplies. They thereby attempt to take financial^{and} administrative matters into their own hands for which they are not employed and which they often lack the competence to undertake.
20. It is recognised that, despite careful planning, additional resources do become necessary during the course of the campaign. Speedy decisions concerning the further allocations of money are required. Some departments, especially Research, were scrupulous in obtaining approval for additional expenditure. Others sent a memo to Finance Department following authorisation from an Officer to spend more. This procedure should be standard in every instance. Post de facto approval was obtained in other cases, for example to avoid embarrassment with temporary staff.
21. The most significant unidentified (in the budget) commitments of funds had however been made prior to the start of the Election campaign.
22. At the time of writing, the full extent of unbudgeted expenditure cannot yet be identified as all bills have not been received. A full analysis of actual costs will be made and reported for the record.

The Future

23. Our personnel policies and procedures, and our financial control procedures are still being developed and should be fully operational by the time of the next Election. In an age of employee legislation, rising expectations, increasing costs and complicated administration, we need to continue the process of professionalising our internal administration, co-ordinating and centralising our procedures and tightening our financial control.

Conclusion

24. The problems encountered during the Election are those of the Office in general. Their correction in the coming year or so should have a beneficial effect at the next Election.


L.D.C.

To: The Chairman

Conservative Research Department

24 Old Queen Street, London SW1H 9HX Telephone 01-222 9511

Chairman: ANGUS MAUDE, TD, MP
Director: CHRISTOPHER PATTEN

CONFIDENTIAL

LORD THORNEYCROFT

Election Post Mortem

Most of the comments we have received from outside the Department suggest that we had a remarkably successful campaign. Nonetheless a number of things went wrong. For some of our mistakes the blame can be shared with others, but for many the responsibility is ours alone.

1. Nailing lies

We did not establish satisfactory machinery for monitoring and swiftly nailing Labour lies. The Political Section was expected to undertake this task in a general way but individual desk officers were also expected to handle lies in their own areas of policy. In practice, responsibility tended to fall between these two stools. This is one of the reasons why a number of lies were not contradicted by our spokesmen more quickly. Another reason, however, was the reluctance of many of our spokesmen to be distracted from the main task of presenting our positive policies. I attach a copy of an article the Economist would have published in the event of a 'hung' parliament which argues that this reluctance was misguided.

2. Regional briefing

The absence of any arrangements at the outset for regional briefing for the Leader and other major spokesmen was an extraordinary omission and one which it was not possible fully to correct in mid campaign.

3. Broadcasting

Since interviews on television are nearly always more important than speeches, another important omission was the failure at the beginning of the campaign to nominate a single

individual to brief Shadows and others going on television and radio. In the latter part of the campaign, however, David Nicholson discharged this task very satisfactorily.

4. Press Conferences

The failure to establish a consistent procedure for agreeing the text of statements to be released at Press Conferences created a lot of unnecessary work and confusion. We should probably have brought pressure to bear on the media to give proper coverage to the main subject of the Press Conference a number of days earlier than we did.

5. Leader's speeches

These were a great success but throughout the campaign we were acutely conscious that no senior member of CRD was involved in their drafting and that we did not have the opportunity to vet final texts. We could not help feeling that this created unnecessary risks. But perhaps this is just a bit of departmental arrogance.

6. Saatchis

Saatchi's excuse for what most people seem to regard as a rather disappointing performance was that they were not given sufficiently precise political guidance. There may be something in this - although there is no doubt that on occasion they expended a lot of energy endeavouring to evade political control.

One reason why the agency may not have been given an exact and consistent steer may have been the ambivalence of CRD's role in the exercise. Our main task was to check texts for factual accuracy. But we were also invited to make comments about tone of voice and political content. In practice Saatchis only accepted that CRD had a legitimate role in this area when it suited them to do so. Our difficulties were further increased by the fact that, contrary to the assurances we were given, a representative of the Department was not always asked to meetings with Saatchis in the Chairman's office. Moreover, we were never invited to attend Mrs. Thatcher's meetings with the agency.

A separate difficulty was that Mrs. Thatcher, Central Office and CRD nearly always dealt with Tim Bell and David Welch. Most of the writing of PEBs, however, was done by Jeremy Sinclair. Not surprisingly, advice and instructions which the Party gave to Saatchis were often delivered to Jeremy in a very garbled form.

7. Questions of Policy

This exercise went well. But one mistake made was the failure to realise how important it is to provide a continuously consolidated index. At previous General

Elections there has always been a succession of indexes, both alphabetical and numerical. This time we never got a consolidated number index and we only got two alphabetical subject indexes. This undoubtedly made it more difficult for people to find what they wanted quickly.

8. Distribution

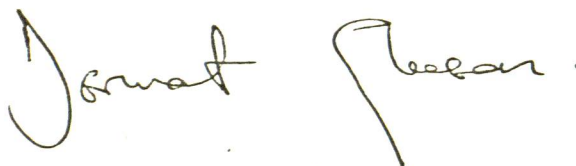
We received a number of complaints from constituencies that the candidate, the agent, the Chairman or somebody else had taken away the only copy of "Daily Notes", "Questions of Policy" and the "Campaign Guide". Despite the cost it would surely be worthwhile sending constituencies more copies of each.

9. Information Room

There were times when the allocation of three people to the Information Room seemed excessive. But the relatively small number of enquiries reflected special circumstances. The "non Election" in October and the early publication of the Campaign Guide and the Campaign Guide Supplement meant that candidates already had an unusual amount of factual information at their disposal. Unless a similar situation arises at the next election I would not, therefore, recommend that the number of staff be reduced.

10. Scotland

I append a separate note on Scotland by Evelyn McDermott (who spent the campaign in Scottish Central Office) explaining what he thinks went wrong.



DERMOT GLEESON

GENERAL ELECTION, MAY 1979 - PUBLICITY DEPARTMENT

Few Campaigns have been more successful for the Publicity Department in Central Office.

It was vital that the Campaign itself should never become an issue in the Election. The Conservative Party needed to fight on its own policies and not on any 'hot' diversions - confrontation between the Leaders; scandals; personality battles etc. We succeeded in avoiding all these traps.

THE PRESS ROOM

Miss Mary Mackenzie served throughout the Campaign as Chief Press Officer and more than anyone else organised and directed the News Room operation. Derek Howe and Gerry Mulligan alternated as Press Aide to Mrs Thatcher on tour. Nine Election Press Officers were recruited as well as one general aide in the News Room to answer telephones etc. The News Room was open from 7.30 am to 10.00pm daily. 310 Press Releases were issued and considerable efforts were taken to ensure accuracy. The Press Room was staffed by our four permanent girls and five temporary typists merit high praise.

1,400 admission passes were issued for Press Conferences and applications from PR Companies were turned down. The News Room received over 10,000 telephone calls during the Campaign. The Press Association two Election Tapes were installed, three telex machines and two operators were hired. These were invaluable in providing regional TV and radio stations with tasters of speeches and we scored many successes in media coverage as a result.

The Election Press Conferences themselves were less successful. There was a failure to prepare short press releases and on more than one occasion three senior spokesmen each addressed the Conference for a few minutes each on entirely different subjects - thus frustrating our objective to focus on a major theme.

...../

The Press Conferences achieve only limited success in promoting special policies for media use. The Chairman met the Sunday Lobby on April 14th and 21st and these meetings were very successful for Sunday coverage.

BROADCASTING

There was an alteration in the PEB grid which gave the Party the substantial advantage of three PEBs in the second week.

200 requests from programmes were handled during the four weeks of the Campaign. The decision on spokesmen was taken each day by John Lindsey and the Chief Whip meeting in John Lindsey's Office at 10.30am. Responsibility for briefing rested with the CRD.

Programmes of news and current affairs were generally balanced with the exception of one of Thames TV Election Debates for which we demanded and received an unqualified apology. A number of other complaints, notably about ITN were made. They caused some hilarity in the Broadcasting Authorities as the general feeling by independent observers was that ITN was heavily biased in favour of the Conservative Party. As it turned out our complaints to ITN enabled them to defend themselves against the more serious complaints from the Labour Party by pointing out that the Conservatives objected too. This was of the greatest assistance to the Editor of ITN.

Audience Research on PEBs was a failure. There was no significant difference in either audience appreciation or numbers of any of the Research on either Labour or Conservative Broadcasts.

MRS THATCHER'S TOURS

These were very popular with the Press, admirably organised and efficiently managed. There was some criticism that the tours were organised for the photographic media at the expense of the writing media. Obviously more attention was given on this occasion to the Photographic events but the Press had plenty to write about and did so.

Two Press Officers and a Press Secretary always accompanied Mrs Thatcher.

The number of touring Press varied between 60-150. The higher numbers covered the local London visits. Security was tight but there were no complaints about its application. Area Offices did well in organising, where possible, press room and bar facilities - and food - although the size of the Leader's Party did seem a constant surprise to workers in the Areas.

In the future more attention should be paid to filing times. After rallies, for example, one coach would have to be held back for 45 minutes to pick up journalists who had to file while the second coach took the remainder onto the next location. It is as well to remember that because of Union rules journalist cannot file copy north of Manchester direct to their London Office. This can add anything up to two hours onto the time taken to get a story into the papers.

The nasty incident in Paddington prompted the restriction of indoor events and the holding of Party Workers gatherings in outside locations with loudspeaker equipment for the Leader. This was very successful.

Harvey Thomas's recce was essential. Television outside broadcast units were properly placed, sound relay was good, press seats/benches were organised.

Only two Lobbys were held for the travelling press and one drinks party and the travelling press would have liked more of both.

PROMOTIONS AND PUBLICATIONS

A detailed report of the working of this Department is available separately to anyone with special interest in it. Along with other Departments it experienced the special difficulties of overlapping the Local Government/General Election/Euro Election publicity material all in production at roughly the same time. The Post Office 'go-slow' caused problems which were solved by alternative despatch arrangements and these were successful. The sales demand on leaflets and posters followed the expected pattern but because of the long Campaign and the greater efficiency

of the Department fewer problems were experienced than in previous Elections.

It was particularly noteworthy that our Advertising Agency and Alan Leonard's Department worked together harmoniously and successfully throughout the Campaign.

CHAIRMAN'S MEETINGS

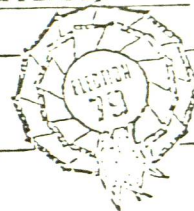
Chairman's Conferences were held twice daily and the same people also attended the St Stephen's Working Lunches.

Apart from the general observation that senior campaign managers could perhaps be more profitably employed in the General Election than spending 6 hours a day talking to each other, I wonder whether these meetings were too large to be effective. There were seldom less than 20 people present including several from each Department. Future campaign planners might like to consider a suggestion to have one representative from each of the Front Line Departments then to have a general briefing and information session for other Departments and interested people on a separate occasion.

GORDON REECE

22.5.79

ELECTION BRITAIN



How the Tory lead crumbled

At the start of the election campaign the opinion polls put the Conservatives at least 12 points in the lead and all the most recent local and parliamentary by-elections confirmed this. From the first few results on Thursday night, it was clear that most of this lead had disappeared like the driven snow.

The Tories lost ground through inaction, and because Mr Callaghan managed to make the issue Mrs Thatcher and her policies, rather than the record of his own government. Despite a carefully planned, media-conscious campaign, Mrs Margaret Thatcher has been doing no more than tread water since electioneering started. On Tuesday, Mr Callaghan taunted that the Tories "had run out of puff", but they had never really got it up.

Usually, an election is fought by an opposition on the attack against the government of the day. This election was fought by the government, on the attack

against the opposition. Mr Callaghan kept asking precisely how the Tories' tax cuts would be paid for. He kept alleging that food prices would go up because of Tory plans to devalue the EEC green pound, that cuts in public expenditure would destroy jobs kept alive by government subsidies, that pensions, social services and education would all be at risk under Tory public expenditure cuts.

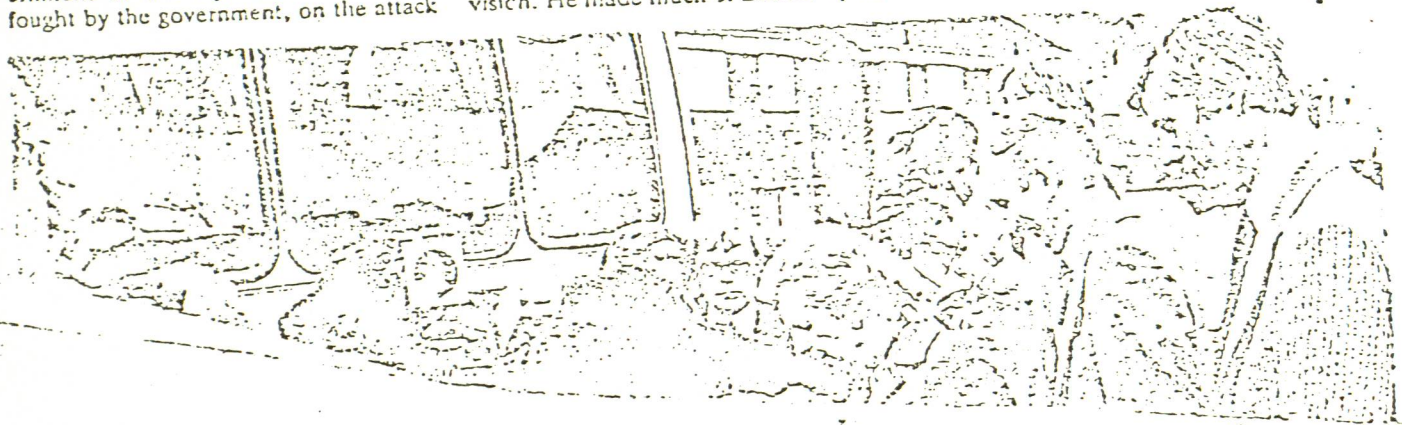
Until too late, Mrs Thatcher's advisers seemed oblivious of how effectively Mr Callaghan's speeches, his and his ministers' television appearances, and (most unnoticed) his candidates in the constituencies were meshing together an attack on these issues.

Labour struck at the weakest links in the Tory shadow cabinet. Mrs Sally Oppenheim, the Tory prices spokesman, has been outshone by her opposite number, the brilliant Mr Roy Hattersley, on television. He made much of Labour's prom-

ise to strengthen the powers of the price commission. At a time when the main macroeconomic danger is of a recession because of a squeeze on profits, this was startlingly dishonest—but the Tories never effectively refuted it. Neither Mr Patrick Jenkin, on social services, nor Mr John Peyton, on agriculture, managed to impress.

Tory campaign tactics came unstuck. The party political broadcasts devised by advertising agents Saatchi and Saatchi were an expensive failure compared with Labour's homespun efforts. The cautious advice of Mrs Thatcher's two wise old men, Lord Thorneycroft and Mr Angus Maude, seems to have been "to do nothing". Inaction prevented any obvious gains from Mrs Thatcher, but it also stopped her ever swinging properly on to the attack.

Behind these errors lay a fundamental misconception about the direction of the campaign. The signs pointed the wrong way. Mrs Thatcher's men viewed the dwindling lead in the opinion polls as a natural fall to a more realistic level. From all over the country, Tory candidates were reporting that they were getting twice the number of people at meetings as in 1974. But Tory voters are a disci-



plined lot who probably went out to vote last time anyway. Mrs Thatcher got the lion's share of the press coverage. She was more exciting news; but this meant—eventually to her disadvantage—that her policies, not Labour's, were the talking points. The popular press was heavily on the Tories' side. The three right-wing tabloids—the Sun, the Daily Mail and the Daily Express—came down too heavily. Their anti-Labour scare tactics probably helped repel the middle-of-the-road voters, rather than convert them.

The Labour leadership, well aware that disquiet about Mrs Thatcher's leadership capabilities was its electoral trump card, played it with great skill. No personal attacks, Mr Callaghan ordained. This was strictly adhered to in the national campaign, although not always in the constituencies (where there was some male chauvinist piggery). Even in his final election broadcast on Tuesday night, Mr Callaghan failed to mention his opponent. Instead he dwelled on his own long ministerial record, leaving the viewer to draw a comparison given a humorous twist by Sir Harold Wilson who openly compared his successor to Stanley Baldwin "at his best". Baldwin was intermittently Tory prime minister between 1923 and 1937.

By the end of a campaign fought on the opposition's policies, the Tories had won some of the arguments, but Labour had won enough of the votes to whittle a huge original lead away.

Mr David Steel spent the campaign wooing voters for the Liberals in the middle ground, which meant that he was fishing most assiduously for those who at the start of the campaign had been inclined to swing to Tory. A good job he did of it too, but Britain's electoral system is not a good friend to his Liberal party.



Steel against the system

Did they get it right?

The very last opinion poll to be taken before the general election was one by Market and Opinion Research International. Interviewing took place on Wednesday between 2pm and 8pm and the result was published on Thursday in the London Evening Standard. Mori's final prediction was a Tory lead of 8%.

Mori had also produced a poll for Thursday's Daily Express, for which it interviewed on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday, showing the Tories ahead by 5.6%. So it will have two chances of claiming to have got the result right. Three other opinion polls were published on polling day. The Daily Telegraph's Gallup poll, which interviewed on Monday and Tuesday, put the Tories a mere 2% ahead. The Sun's Marplan poll, taken on Tuesday, showed a Tory lead of 6%, while the Daily Mail's National Opinion poll put the Tories 7% in front.

This NOP poll had been completed at noon on Wednesday. An earlier NOP poll, published on Tuesday, had put Labour 0.7% ahead—the only national poll taken during the whole campaign which had not put the Tories in front. The largest Tory lead, as in each of the three previous weeks of the campaign, was found by the Research Services Ltd poll, published on Sunday in the Observer. This poll put the Tories 11.5% ahead, after having pressed the don't knows, which RSL had not done in its earlier polls. On the same basis as these, the Tory lead was higher still—13%. The fieldwork for the RSL poll was

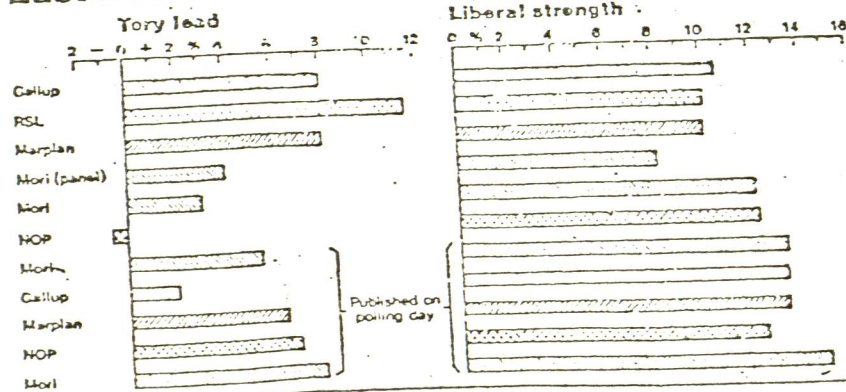
undertaken several days earlier—on April 24th and 25th, so it does not really qualify as a last-minute prediction.

On average, the last four polls shown in the chart put the Tories 5.8% ahead, which suggested that they would be likely to win the election by an overall majority of around 20 seats. The biggest lead was suggested by Mori, which indicated that they would have an overall lead of more than 50: the smallest by Gallup, which implied that Mrs Thatcher would probably not achieve an overall majority, though the Tories would be the largest party.

The chart shows all the national polls published during the past week. The Tory lead seems to have shrunk sharply up until the weekend, but to have widened again since then. All the polls agreed, however, that the Liberal recovery, which had been detected last week, had continued up to the eve of poll. The final Mori poll, showing 15%, was the highest Liberal total shown in any poll for over two years, but it still fell 3.3% short of the Liberal vote in October, 1974. Liberals' hopes of gaining seats on Thursday rested on their belief that they were doing a lot better than average in their most promising areas.

Two polling organisations were in the field on polling day itself—interviewing samples of voters as they left the polling booths. The object of this exercise was to enable the broadcasting organisations to forecast the result immediately the polls closed at 10pm.

Last bets



REVIEW OF OPINION RESEARCH
DURING THE GENERAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN

1. Budget and Opinion Research Programme

The agreed budget for opinion research during the 1979 General Election Campaign was £60,763 (excluding VAT). The changes made in the opinion research programme during the campaign meant that we overspent by £4,259 (excluding VAT).

The original programme for opinion research involved three State of Battle surveys (we actually conducted six), two Scottish surveys (we actually conducted one but on a different basis to what had been planned), three "quickie" surveys (we actually conducted five) and twenty TV check surveys (we actually conducted eleven). In addition we conducted a survey in certain selected Liberal marginal constituencies that had not been included in our original plans.

2. Review of Research Conducted

indeed ORC are currently in the final stages of producing a report on all aspects of the research they conducted for us during the General Election Campaign. Copies of this report should be available by the end of September.

3. Some Lessons for the next Campaign

Clearly the precise opinion research programme that will be required during the next General Election Campaign will depend heavily upon the political circumstances both of the Campaign itself and of the period leading up to the start of the Campaign. Whilst it is not possible to produce any hard and fast rules for what opinion research should be conducted in an Election Campaign the one main lesson that emerged from the 1979 Campaign was the need for flexibility and the capacity to respond quickly to changing political circumstances. Our programme in May 1979 allowed this rapid response - it enabled us to increase the number of detailed State of Battle surveys and quickie surveys, and indeed to conduct research that had not been planned for in particular the research in the Scottish constituencies and in the Liberal seats.

Such a level of flexibility requires a very high level of expertise both in the company conducting the research for us and in the Research Department. The opinion research company must be able to respond quickly and efficiently to our demands for research and CRD must contain the expertise required to understand the limits of opinion research. In addition to these general points, in planning for the next campaign I believe we should at least consider the following points.

(a) Television Research

It was clear from the research we conducted on reactions to television broadcasts during the campaign that further research will be required to refine the techniques we used. Provision for this research has been made in the opinion research budget for the current financial year.

(b) State of Battle Surveys

Provision should be made for a State of Battle survey to be conducted every weekend during the campaign - including the final weekend. Computer facilities are essential so as to permit the rapid production of a sophisticated analysis of results.

The computer facilities made available in May worked but this system could be considerably improved with forward planning.

(c) Quickie Surveys

The programme for the next Election Campaign should not attempt to fix dates for "quickie" surveys - we did in May and never kept to them. The timing of such research should depend totally upon how the political situation develops during the campaign.

(d) Constituency Research

The research we conducted in the Liberal marginal seats and in certain Scottish constituencies had had been included in the plans for final research, but the research proved extremely useful.

I would suggest that in the next Election Campaign we should be planning to conduct research in:-

- i) seats with a strong Liberal presence;

- ii) marginal Con/Lab or Lab/Con seats;
- iii) seats with a strong SNP presence.

It will be difficult given the redistribution of constituency boundaries that will take place before the next Election to define the constituencies that we should be including in this research. Techniques exist to get over these problems but they require quite a lot of detailed and time-consuming research.

(e) Questions

Before the 1979 Election we attempted to produce a "question bank" of questions that might be used in surveys during the campaign. This system did not work as it was not possible to forecast in advance the areas that we would have to cover. Almost all the questions used were produced as required - but to use such an approach during an election campaign requires a high level of expertise in CRD in order to translate political issues into meaningful opinion research questions.

(f) Reports

The format of the reports produced by ORC - one-page key conclusions - with supporting tables was I believe successful.

We need for the next campaign to consider in advance who is to receive copies of the findings from our campaign research and how they are to get them - the postal service proved fairly unsatisfactory.